



## **Clean Energy Future Committee**

Date: May 24, 2019

Time: 8:00 a.m.

Location: Lyons Hearing Room, Arlington Town Hall

Members present: Jim DiTullio, Shelly Dein, Pasi Miettinen, Adam Chapdelaine, Ken Pruitt, Dave Levy, Marc Breslow, Ryan Katofsky, Coralie Cooper, Dan Amstutz.

Members not present: Emily Sullivan, Nellie Aikenhead.

The Meeting Convened at 8:02 a.m.

### **Minutes**

The Meeting Minutes from the April 25<sup>th</sup> 2019 Meeting were unanimously approved.

### **Presentation on Transportation by Eric Bourassa, Metropolitan Area Planning Council**

Mr. Pruitt introduced Mr. Bourassa, who discussed ways that transportation can be made less carbon-intensive.

MAPC was established in the 1960s to help towns in Eastern Massachusetts, primarily surrounding Boston, coordinate planning efforts for improvements made by individual towns. Today, as part of improving transportation in the greater Boston area, MAPC is focused on transportation electrification (promoting electric vehicles) and shifting the mode of transportation (mode shift). Under mode shift, MAPC is promoting three strategies:

- 1) Transit and bike infrastructure
- 2) Congestion pricing and technology
- 3) Land use and parking

Mr. Bourassa described that once a family has two automobiles, it's very difficult to get the family to shift to other modes of transportation. Further, even a shift to electric vehicles still leaves the problem of congestion in the current city infrastructure.

Mr. Bourassa laid out data points from MAPC analysis of Arlington data:

- 60% drive alone
- 20% take transit
- 6.6% work from home
- 6% carpool
- 3.3% bicycle
- 2.7% walk
- 0.6% other

Mr. Chapdelaine asked how a person driving to Alewife would be captured in the data set. Mr. Bourassa clarified that person would be included under transit.

Mr. Bourassa noted that while it was good news that 40% of commuters do not drive alone, the focus should be on the 60% that do. Mr. Katofsky asked where the 60% are currently driving – is it primarily into Boston and Cambridge. Mr. Amstutz noted that a lot of drivers also head to Somerville and other locations outside of Boston.

Mr. Bourassa noted that Arlington is a pilot town for dedicated bus lanes. MAPC worked on the analysis of Arlington's recent pilot project to assess the impact on street parking and other tangential issues. MAPC is conducting the same analysis for the number 87 bus in Somerville. Mr. Bourassa noted that the MBTA has a lot of interest in dedicated bus lanes. Further, the MBTA has a lot of interest in electrification of its buses.

Mr. Levy asked if an electric bus vs. a conventional bus is the most efficient use of resources for the MBTA. Mr. Bourassa noted that conventional buses are fairly polluting, requiring robust ridership to offset the pollution.

Mr. Pruitt asked about the price difference between a diesel and electric bus. Mr. Katofsky knows of one leasing company that leases the battery, noting the operating savings are immense with an electric bus.

Mr. Bourassa also noted that the Green Line extension was originally planned to go all the way to Route 16 and noted there is \$9 million in the capital plan to further study such an extension.

Ms. Dein noted that express buses should also be part of the solution.

Mr. Bourassa then turned to micro-mobility, noting that MAPC is coordinating with cities and towns on Lime Bikes as well as scooters. Mr. Bourassa said that the Lime Bike experience has been positive, but he is unsure if it will work long term under a private business model.

Mr. Bourassa then discussed the importance of locating housing within Route 128 as most transit exists in this corridor. Mr. Bourassa noted that locating more housing around transit should improve congestion. Mr. Levy raised a

concern if the existing MBTA infrastructure could support an increase in population given its current service problems.

Mr. Bourassa then turned to parking noting that parking tends to be overbuilt. There is a high cost for “free” parking – it costs a lot to build (which makes housing more expensive) and it decreases the amount of land available for other uses.

Mr. Bourassa discussed transit corridor development, noting we need to get those places right where lower car lifestyles can succeed based on land use planning.

Mr. Miettinen asked if MAPC is working to get more industrial and commercial development away from Boston into the suburbs to decrease congestion in Boston. Mr. Bourassa responded that the MAPC was focused on bringing companies and employees to mass transit corridors.

Ms. Dein wondered if more commercial and industrial spaces would exist if the workforce would come from Arlington or surrounding towns.

Mr. DiTullio noted that congestion pricing is very challenging politically. He wondered if a carbon impact fee for parking would be a better solution.

The Meeting ended on 9:05 a.m.

Submitted by Dave Levy.